Elizabeth Zhu

MUN

January 17, 2012

**Environmental Council (UK)**

**Topic:** Dealing with trash flotillas and the Trash Vortex in the Pacific Ocean.

**Main Idea:**

1. How the gyre formed in the ocean.
2. Stop throwing the trash in the ocean; find other ways to solve it.
3. This topic is important because this will make the animals and plants that live in the ocean die, and it will affect the lives of all the people who live by the ocean.

**Detail of each Idea:**

Idea #1:

* There’s a trash gyre in the center of the Pacific Ocean. If we continue to throw the trash in the Pacific Ocean, the trash circle will become bigger and bigger.
* We need to find a way to solve this problem. The circle is as big as France, so picking up all the trash will be impossible.
* This gyre is the largest one on Earth, and one of five major subtropical gyres. Each subtropical gyre is created by mountainous flows of air moving from the tropics toward the Polar Regions. The air in the North Pacific subtropical gyre is heated at the equator and rises high into the atmosphere because of its buoyancy in cooler, surrounding air masses. The rotation of the Earth on its axis moves the heated air mass westward as it rises, then eastward once it cools and descends at around 30 degrees north latitude, creating a huge, clockwise-rotating mass of air.
* A gyre is a huge amount of water moving slowly in a circle. This particular gyre isn’t manmade; it has more to do with forms of nature. There are at least four other gyres like this one on Earth.
* If we solve one gyre problem, we can solve all the others, but if we don’t solve it, it’ll be a big problem for everyone.

Idea #2:

* If we continue to throw trash in the ocean, it’ll make the gyre bigger, which means more problems for us. The correct way to stop the gyre from growing is to stop throwing our trash in the Pacific.
* Personally, I think the citizens didn’t do anything wrong. It’s the factories that are at fault. The governments should tell the factories to stop throwing trash into ocean, with punishments for factories that choose to disobey.
* Citizens should also organize the trash and put them in the correct bins, with high fines for citizens who choose to disobey. Factories in charge of trash should also recycle all the trash they can.
* If the trash isn’t recyclable, the scientists should get busy with ways of recycling them. For example, some trash can be a part of car after we give its shape minor changes; or the smaller pieces can be sent to schools for art projects.

Idea #3:

* If the trash gyre continues to grow, it will hurt the animals and plants that live in the ocean. The bacteria that live in the ocean will die, because they don’t have enough sunlight to live (the trash blocks the sunlight). If the bacteria in the ocean die, the fish don’t have anything to eat and the fisherman can’t get fish. If a lot of fisherman can’t get fish, the country will become poor. Then the people that live in the country will not have food to eat. This chain phenomenon will make humans become extinct just like the dinosaurs became extinct millions of years ago.

**UN**

* The United Nations Environment Programme is doing a project called “Clean Up the World”. It engages more than 40 million people from 120 different countries in clean up operations, and has a special initiative on marine debris (United Nations Environment Programme 2005). “Clean Up the World” was originally started as an outreach program from “Clean-Up Australia Day”, a program that has been very successful in helping to clean up beaches of Australia (United Nations Environment Programme 2005). In the UK, a non-government organization called the Marine Conservation Society has set up programs to clean up beaches as well as to raise awareness of the problems of marine debris (United Nations Environment Programme 2005).

Resources:

* <http://www.mindfully.org/Plastic/Ocean/Moore-Trashed-PacificNov03.htm>
* <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Pacific_Garbage_Patch>
* <http://seaplexscience.com/>